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and Whig civilians, who either vigorously sustained it, or opposed to it only a feeble resistance? It made the Cæsars who have come back to rule over Rome. But for the Mexican war, General Taylor would have remained a 'frontier colonel,' as Mr. Webster sneeringly called him, and not even lunacy would have conceived of him for President. But for the Mexican war, General Scott, though in honor and in bravery retaining his invincibility, would have lacked, to political wooers, the more potent charm of availability, and would never have been nominated. And but for the Mexican war, the shades of oblivion would soon have perfected their easy work of hiding the name of General Pierce from the world forever. And now, behold the civilians, Cass, Buchanan, Marcy, and the rest, who stood sponsors and god-fathers for that bloody deed! Defeated in 1848 by the very man whom the war they supported, had raised up! General Taylor discomfited only one Santa Anna in Mexico, but half a dozen at home. Look, too, at Mr. Webster, whose giant blows, had they been struck at the fitting time, might have broken the helmet and pierced the mailed armor of that Mars; yet see him thrust aside in 1848, to make room for one hero born of that war, and in 1852 hardly allowed to enter his name as a competitor against another. In 1852, see, also, General Pierce, who had about as much to do with the Mexican victories as little Iulus had to do with the Trojan war, yet plucking the nomination from Cass, Buchanan, Marcy, Douglass, and all the rest. The camp triumphs over cabinet and Senate. The *cedant arma togæ* is read backwards. How many of these warriors will remain in 1856 and in 1860, to shoulder aside the civilians for the third and fourth time, because they were false to their duty in waging or in tolerating that war, remains to be seen. But what a righteous retribution for those civilians who, at first, might have prevented, or afterwards might have stayed, that effusion of human blood! As a specimen of poetic justice, romance or drama has nothing finer."

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#### HONORS TO MILITARY MEN.

At a military dinner given to Sir HARRY SMITH, some three years ago in London, he remarked: "it must be confessed, gentlemen, ours is a DAMNABLE PROFESSION." This same Sir HARRY SMITH was commander-in-chief of the British forces in the Caffre war in South Africa, and in that capacity has done a great deal to illustrate the truth of his own declaration. Whatever may be said in justification of a strictly defensive war, the *profession* of arms is both damnable and infamous. The professional soldier follows war as a trade. He contracts with the government under which he serves, to prosecute *any* war which that government may declare, whether defensive or aggressive, to the best of his ability. He cannot reason and decide whether the war is just or unjust; his sole business is, to obey orders. If he conclude that those orders in any case bind him to commit crime, he has no alternative but to execute them, or resign his commission at the sacrifice of his military reputation. The professional soldier, therefore, whether he be officer or private, is simply a hired assassin. This is strictly and literally the truth. He engages to kill openly or secretly, (for in war a midnight attack upon a sleeping enemy is considered honorable,) whomsoever his government may designate, whether man, woman, or child. For this he is paid a stipulated sum, which is his salary, and means of living. All his military education is intended and adapted to qualify him to kill with skill, neatness and despatch; and he is honored in exact proportion to the number of enemies he has slaughtered.

Now, every life sacrificed by the aggressors in an unjust war, is simply a murder. Admit the rightfulness of a strictly defensive war, and still those who provoke the quarrel can be regarded in no other light than as wholesale murderers. But the contract of the soldier with his government binds him to wage whatever war that government may declare, whether of defence or aggression, and thus perpetrate wholesale butchery of human beings for hire.

If war is ever justifiable, it is only as the last resort in defence of rights more precious than life itself. This every civilized man admits. Even then it is a fearful and mournful alternative. The heart possessed of the commonest feelings of humanity, shrinks from the terrible ordeal of battle, and will take arms, if at all, only from a stern and resistless sense of duty, from a discharge of which there is no possible escape. Such a man—and if war in this extreme case be right, no other kind of man is fit to wage it—will embrace the very first opportunity to lay down his arms, and return joyfully to the more congenial and happy pursuits of peace.

It is a disputed and doubtful point, whether bloodshed, even in this extreme case, is justifiable; but it is not doubtful or disputed, that under any other circumstances war is stupendously wicked. Now, it is evident from the nature of the case, that none of this reluctance to enter upon the bloody work of human slaughter, can be felt by the professional soldier. He chooses war for a trade, in preference to all other callings in life, and bargains to kill with alacrity, and for reward, whenever ordered. Thus the first choice of his vocation indicates either outright blood-thirstiness, or a reckless indifference to the sacredness of human life; and all his subsequent training in the camp, and on the battle-field, tends to foster and strengthen both these dispositions of mind. In view of this inevitable tendency of the military profession, it is not strange that the annals of war, between what are called by courtesy Civilized and Christianized nations, are stained with the record of the most cold-blooded and atrocious crimes, such as robbery, arson, rape, adultery and murder.

It is surely, then, a sad and disheartening indication to see a professedly Christian nation honoring men with the highest offices in its gift, solely or mainly on account of their achievements in battle. Yet such has been the practice of this nation almost from the beginning. The men who have been raised to the highest civil stations, with the greatest enthusiasm, and the largest majorities, have been men whose chief, and in some cases whose only distinction was success in the work of human slaughter. What is worse than all, Christians of this land have not only seen these things done without rebuke, but have even aided to do them!

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#### MISCELLANEOUS.

**REPLY TO A CALL FOR A FINE, OR A MILITARY DRILL.**—In the State of New York, persons liable to military service are excused by paying an annual tax of only seventy-five cents. It seems, however, that some there refuse even this pittance; and in response to a demand for either this small tax, or his appearance on parade, “fully armed and equipped according to law,” one “C. O. READ,” under date of “August 1, 1852,” thus writes to the aforesaid militia officer:—

“The meaning of the above notice, reduced to plain English, I understand to be this: that I provide myself with shooting and stabbing irons, or a long butcher-knife, (as the case may be,) and assemble with others, similar-